



COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR RESTAURANTS WITH DINING ROOM SEATING

On April 23rd, 2020, Governor Kemp issued an Executive Order to allow restaurants to reopen dining rooms, in accordance with specific guidelines, starting April 27th, 2020. This includes all facilities that meet the definition of “food service establishment” per O.C.G.A. §26-2-370(2). *(Restaurants without in-house dining operating prior to April 27th should continue to follow previous guidelines with the exception that now all foodservice employees are required to wear face coverings, regardless of whether the dining room is open.)*

The routine inspection timeline under Chapter 511-6-1-.10(2) is to be extended by 120 days for any permit holder of a food service establishment maintaining an “A” food safety grade which was scheduled to have a routine inspection at any time between March 14th, 2020 and September 10th, 2020.

Restaurants offering in-house dining must comply with the following requirements.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

- Screen and evaluate workers who exhibit signs of illness, such as a fever over 100.4°F, cough, or shortness of breath. *While it is strongly recommended that each restaurant have an infrared thermometer on hand to screen employees, it is not required. Employees may screen themselves prior to showing up for work with thermometers they have at home to check themselves for a fever.*
- Require workers who exhibit signs of illness to not report to work or to seek medical attention. Per existing U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Code and Department of Public Health requirements, employees who are sick should remain home. If an employee becomes ill or presents signs of illness at work, the operator should identify the employee's condition during a pre-work screening and send the employee home.
- Restaurants shall create, maintain, and follow established policies regarding when employees who have become ill are permitted to return to work. An employee with known or suspected COVID-19 must follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines to self-isolate for at least seven (7) days after symptom onset and end isolation only after symptoms have improved and the employee has been fever-free and/or symptom-free for three (3) consecutive days without medication before returning to work.
- Ensure the Food Safety Manager certification of the person in charge is up-to-date and provide food handler training to refresh employees.
- Implement teleworking for all possible workers.



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- Implement staggered shifts for all possible workers.
- Where possible, stagger workstations to avoid employees standing adjacent to one another or next to each other. Where six (6) feet of separation is not possible, consider spacing options that include other mitigation efforts with increased frequency of cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.
- Hold all meetings and conferences virtually, whenever possible.
- Train all employees on the importance and expectation of increased frequency of handwashing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol, and provide clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face. *Food service employees are required to wash their hands according to the Georgia Food Service Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-1-.03(5)(b)&(c). "Hand sanitizer," for purposes of Executive Order 04.23.20.02, means "any hand antiseptic, hand rub, soap, or agent applied to the hands for the purpose of removing common pathogens." Hand antiseptics and hand sanitizers must meet the criteria for the US Food and Drug Administration's food additive definition of Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) if food will be touched after using. Otherwise, hands should be thoroughly rinsed in clean water prior to handling food after the use of any hand antiseptic or hand sanitizers that do not meet the GRAS requirements. Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prohibited.*
- Require all employees to wear face coverings at all times. Such coverings shall be cleaned or replaced daily. *Face coverings are made of cloth or fabric and must cover the nose and mouth while being worn. Face coverings and face shields are not the same thing. Face shields are clear plastic barriers that do not contact the face but are worn as a way to protect the full face from spray aimed at the individual wearing the shield. Employees will not be allowed to work unless they have a face covering. Instructions for making face coverings can be found on the CDC's website:*
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf>.
- Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment (*such as pens, pencils, check holders, etc.*). *Clean registers or Point of Sale machines between employee use.*
- Establish limit numbers to reduce contact in employee breakrooms.
- Prohibit handshaking and other unnecessary person-to-person contact in the workplace.



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- Increase physical space between workers and patrons, and limit contact between wait staff and patrons.
- Remind third-party delivery drivers and any suppliers of your internal distancing requirements.
- Implement procedures to increase cleaning and sanitizing frequency of surfaces in the back-of-house. Avoid all food contact surfaces when using disinfectants.

CUSTOMER & PATRON SAFETY:

- Post signage on entrances that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted in the facility.
- No more than ten (10) patrons should be allowed in the facility per 500 square feet of public space. In calculating the total number of public space square feet, such calculation shall include waiting and bar areas, if any, but shall not include hallways, restrooms, and spaces closed to patrons. *Outdoor dining areas are included in the square footage calculation. If allowed by local ordinances, additional outdoor customer dining areas may be provided. In dining areas with less than 500 square feet, patrons must be able to maintain at least 6 feet from other patrons and employees at all times. Carry-out, to-go, delivery and curbside pick-up are still allowed.*
- Where practicable, take-out and curbside pick-up services should be prioritized over dine-in services.
- Thoroughly detail, clean, and sanitize the entire facility prior to resuming dine-in services and continue to do so regularly, focusing such cleaning and sanitation on high contact areas that would be touched by employees and patrons.
- Limit party size at tables to no more than six.
- Enforce Social Distancing of non-cohabitating persons while present on such entity's leased or owned property. *Ensure patrons are seated at least 6 feet apart at any bar and that tables in the bar area are at least 6 feet away from customers seated at the bar.*
- Do not allow patrons to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas. Design a process to ensure patron separation while waiting to be seated that can include floor markings, outdoor distancing, or waiting in cars.



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- Update floor plans for common dining areas, redesigning seating arrangements to ensure at least six (6) feet of separation from seating to seating. Utilize physical barriers on booth seating when available.
- The use of disposable paper menus is strongly encouraged, which should be discarded after each patron use. Otherwise, businesses subject to this Section shall clean and sanitize reusable menus between each use by a patron. Non-touch menus are also acceptable for use.
- Between diners, clean and sanitize table condiments, digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops and commonly touched areas, and discard single-use items.
- Use rolled silverware and eliminate table presets.
- Remove items from self-service drink, condiment, utensil, and tableware stations and have workers provide such items to patrons directly wherever practicable. *Customers can still utilize the self-service drink stations provided social distancing is maintained.*
- Discontinue use of salad bars and buffets. *Restaurants may convert buffets and salad bars into cafeteria style serving, provided employees dispense food for customers from behind plexiglass barriers and social distancing between customers is maintained.*
- If providing a "grab and go" service, stock coolers to no more than minimum levels.
- Clean and sanitize restrooms regularly, check restrooms based on the frequency of use, and ensure adequate supply of soap and paper towels at all times. *Some restaurants may not be equipped with paper towel dispensers, since it is not required by the Georgia Food Service Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-1; however, it is strongly recommended that paper towels be provided.*
- Where practical, consider a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating.
- Where practicable, physical barriers such as partitions or plexiglass at registers should be used.
- Use technological solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction: mobile ordering, mobile access to menus to plan in advance, text on arrival for seating,



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and contactless payment options. *If PIN pads are used, they should be sanitized between patrons.*

- Provide hand sanitizer for use by patrons, including contactless hand sanitizing stations when available. *Hand sanitizer must be provided; however, it is recommended to use the contactless hand sanitizing stations if possible. Hand sanitizer wipes are also an acceptable form of sanitizer to provide for both patrons and employees. See definition of “hand sanitizer” above under Employee Health and Safety Measures. If hand sanitizer is not available, the restaurant will not be allowed to open its dining room.*
- If possible, use an exit from the facility separate from the entrance.
- Mark ingress/egress to and from restrooms to establish paths that mitigate proximity for patrons and staff.
- All restaurant or dining room playgrounds shall be closed.
- Discard all food items that are out of date.

ENFORCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE ORDER REQUIREMENTS:

The local health departments will enforce the requirements of the Georgia Food Service Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-1. Local law enforcement will enforce the requirements of the Executive Order.